DC

20

POISON IVY™

WILSON
TAKARA
PRIANTO

HOT FOR TEACHER!

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF PAMELA ISLEY! PART 2 OF 3

13+ TEEN

DAWN OF DC

TO SEIZE THE PRESENT...AMANDA WALLER MUST CONTROL THE FUTURE!

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SUICIDE SQUAD

DREAM TEAM

DC

DAWN OF DC

MARCH

4 ISSUES

WRITTEN BY NICOLE MAINES

ART AND COVER BY EDDY BARROWS AND EBER FERREIRA

THE SEATTLE WATERFRONT. YEARS AGO.

Scientific discovery is not a **clean** business.

It's hard. It's **messy.** It's full of unexpected **hazards.**

Sometimes you **never** get **answers** to your **questions.**

KRSH

BANG

Sometimes you discover the **questions themselves** were the **wrong ones** to **ask.**

BANG

KRASH

DC COMICS PRESENTS:

POISON IVY

CHAPTER TWENTY.

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But in the midst of all that **turmoil** and **uncertainty**, you've **got** to keep **going**.

HEY!

The plants **Woodrue** taught to **listen** could now **move** as well.

Hnngh!

Keeping them all in **order** was becoming more and more of a **challenge**.

Ah--

--HA!

Not to mention a pain in the **ass**.

GOTCHA!

THWK

There goes a *whole day* of work.

It's going to take me *hours* to *clean up* after you.

I don't even remember what day of the *week* it is. Or the last time I went *home*...

PAM?

WHAT'S GOING ON IN HERE?

NOTHING. ONE OF THE EXPERIMENTS *ESCAPED.*

Again...

YOU OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO HANDLE *ONE* LITTLE *VENUS FLYTRAP*, PAMELA. IT DOESN'T EVEN HAVE *LEGS.*

ANYWAY, *FORGET* ALL THAT FOR NOW.

I NEED YOU TO GO *LIBERATE* SOME PHOSPHORIC *GROWTH MEDIUM* FROM THE *UNIVERSITY.*

AGAIN? BUT I ALMOST GOT *CAUGHT* LAST TIME.

DO YOU WANT ALL OUR *WORK* TO *DIE?*

NO...

THEN *DO* WHAT YOU'RE *TOLD.*

I'VE GOT TO GO *CONVINCE* ONE OF OUR *FUNDERS* IN *GOTHAM* TO *FRONT* US ANOTHER *HALF MILLION.*

HOPEFULLY, HE WON'T ASK TOO MANY *QUESTIONS* ABOUT WHAT'S *ACTUALLY* GOING *ON* IN HERE.

SKRITCH

SKRTCH

What... WHAT'S THAT *RASH* ON YOUR NECK?

ARE YOU... are you dosing *yourself* with this stuff?

OF COURSE NOT!

...

HONESTLY, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'D SAY SOMETHING SO STUPID.

GET THE GROWTH MEDIUM. CLEAN UP THIS MESS. I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.

SLAM

He was lying, of course.

I knew it even **then**, though I wouldn't **admit** it to myself.

=Snff=

THE UNIVERSITY.
A FEW DAYS LATER.

I just kept **going.** Like a zombie. Shuffling from **one** task to the **next.**

Hoping for a **breakthrough** to help me **feel** something.

PAM!

WOW, IT'S-- GREAT TO *SEE* YOU AGAIN.

WE THOUGHT YOU *DROPPED OUT.*

NO.

JUST *BUSY.*

Well-- WOW. OKAY. A LOT'S *HAPPENED* SINCE YOU WERE HERE LAST.

YOU'VE BEEN *AWAY* FOR SO LONG THAT YOU HAVEN'T EVEN MET THE *NEW STUDENT.*

NEW STUDENT?

HI, PAM.

I'M **BELLA GARTEN.** I'VE HEARD A **LOT** ABOUT YOU.

OH, GOOD, YOU'VE ALREADY STARTED **INTRODUCING** YOURSELVES.

I THINK YOU TWO WILL **REALLY** GET ALONG.

And for a while, I **tried.**

Tried to **get along.**

BELLA'S GOT SOME **INCREDIBLE** THEORIES ABOUT **HYBRIDIZATION...**

...SHE REALLY **PUSHES** THE **ENVELOPE...** VERY FEW **GRADUATE STUDENTS** HAVE THE **GUTS** TO TAKE AN EXPERIMENT AS **FAR** AS **SHE** DOES...

Tried to **tolerate** the presence of this new **intruder.**

Soon enough, I came to a **terrible** realization--

THIS ISN'T ***DEVELOPING*** THE WAY I'D ***EXPECT.***

DID YOU REMEMBER TO PUT THE AMMONIUM IN ***BEFORE*** YOU ADDED THE SOIL SAMPLE?

...NO, ACTUALLY, I ***DIDN'T.***

Bella was **better** at **everything.**

Prepping **slides**, grafting **stems**...

WELL ***DONE,*** BELLA.

IT'S ***GREAT*** TO SEE A STUDENT TAKING THIS KIND OF ***INITIATIVE*** TO GET THINGS ***RIGHT.***

And maybe **other** things too.

Pretty soon, she was **everywhere.**

Even the places I **least** expected to **find** her.

Huh?!

HEY, PAM. I HOPE I DIDN'T ***STARTLE*** YOU. I JUST COULDN'T RESIST THESE ***AUGUSTIFOLIA.*** THIS PLACE IS... QUITE ***SOME-THING.***

WHAT ARE ***YOU*** DOING HERE?

"Jason"? HE'S "JASON" TO YOU NOW?

JASON INVITED ME.

DO YOU CALL HIM SOMETHING ***ELSE?***

YES. ***NO.*** I mean--

--THIS PLACE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ***SECRET...*** JUST MINE AND ***HIS...***

Well.

WE COULD ALWAYS SHARE.

A FEW DAYS LATER.

We had to in the end. Share.

The space, the resources, the ideas.

The PROFESSOR.

WE'RE CLOSE TO A BREAK-THROUGH, LADIES! I CAN FEEL IT!

It wasn't easy.

That shipping container was pretty snug for three people.

We fought. A lot.

WE'RE FALLING **BEHIND.** THE SPIDER-WILLOW **HYBRIDIZATION** ISN'T MOVING **FAST** ENOUGH FOR JASON--

WE SHOULD HAVE **ABANDONED** THAT PROJECT **WEEKS** AGO. IT'S A **DEAD END.** WE DON'T **HAVE** TO DO **EVERYTHING** HE SAYS--

THIS IS **HIS** LAB! WE CAN'T JUST DECIDE TO **SCRAP** ENTIRE **EXPERIMENTS** WITHOUT HIS **INPUT.**

COME **ON,** PAM. GROW A **SPINE.** WE HAVE A CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING **INCREDIBLE** HERE, AND HE'S JUST GETTING IN THE **WAY.**

YOU'RE **INFURIATING!**

YOU'RE **INSUFFERABLE!**

WELL, **YOU'RE--**

--you--

--YOU JUST-- DO **EVERYTHING** SO **PERFECTLY--**

You ever **want** someone so much you end up **hating** them, or **hate** someone so much you end up **wanting** them?

That's what it was **like.**

Angry. Urgent. Impossible to **resist.**

WE CAN'T *TELL* HIM. NOT *EVER.*

I *KNOW.*

BELLA'S APARTMENT.
A FEW NIGHTS LATER.

We started meeting at **her** place. Just the **two** of us.

Where no one else could **see.**

AND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT ***COMMUNICATION*** IN TERMS OF ***PHEROMONES,*** YOU START TO REALIZE WE'RE ***REALLY*** NOT SO ***DIFFERENT*** FROM PLANTS-- WE JUST DON'T KNOW WE'RE ***DOING*** IT.

I felt like I could **talk** to her in a way I **couldn't** talk to **him.**

EXACTLY. WE HAVE SO MUCH ***DNA*** IN COMMON, THERE'S ***CHEMICAL OVERLAP...*** IDENTICAL MOLECULES PRODUCED BY DIFFERENT SPECIES...

I'VE... I'VE NEVER MET ***ANYONE*** ELSE WHO ***THINKS*** LIKE ***YOU.*** NOT EVEN ALEC OR LINDA OR PHILIP...

She knew how to **listen.** She wasn't just **waiting** to **talk over** me.

COME ON.

WHERE ARE WE ***GOING?***

BACK TO THE ***LAB.*** I HAVE SOME ***IDEAS--***

All we had was **each other.**

Nobody else **understood** what our days and nights in the **lab** were **like.**

Not even **him.**

After that, things began to get **weird.**

Woodrue definitely suspected **something.**

But I think he lacked the **imagination** to figure out **exactly** what it **was.**

All he knew was that his **two star pupils,** between whom he'd tried **so hard** to create a **rivalry,** suddenly had **secrets.**

STOP **WHISPERING.**

GET BACK TO **WORK.**

And he **HATED** it.

WHAT I'M **ASKING** YOU TO **DO** ISN'T **COMPLICATED.** IT JUST REQUIRES A LITTLE BIT OF **BRAVERY.**

THE **FIRST** ONE OF YOU TO **SUCCEED** WILL HAVE HER **NAME** ON A **PATENT.** THAT'S **WORTH** IT, RIGHT? WORTH ALL OUR **SACRIFICES.**

I won't **pretend** we were immune to this **pressure.**

We were **still** always trying to **outdo** each other.

CREEE

?!

HAVE YOU BEEN HERE *ALL NIGHT?!*

We knew we'd **never** have a chance to do this kind of work **again.**

I GUESS I MUST'VE LOST TRACK OF THE *TIME.*

THAT'S NOT SOMETHING TO *BRAG* ABOUT.

YOU'RE GOING TO *BURN OUT,* PAM.

SPENDING *EVERY* WAKING HOUR IN HERE *ISN'T* GOING TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN *FASTER.* IT'S JUST GOING TO MAKE YOU *SLOPPIER.* YOU'LL START MAKING *MISTAKES.*

WE CAN'T ALL BE *PERFECT* LIKE *SOME* PEOPLE.

SOME OF US HAVE TO *WORK HARDER* TO MAKE UP FOR THE FACT THAT WE'RE NOT *BRILLIANT SCIENTISTS.*

BUT NOT *THIS* HARD.

I-I *WORRY* THAT BECAUSE YOU'RE THIS CUTE LITTLE *REDHEAD*, YOU *BELIEVE* PEOPLE WHEN THEY TELL YOU YOU'RE JUST A *VAPID*, BRAINLESS *TEACHER'S PET.*

BUT YOU'RE *NOT*, PAMELA. YOU'VE GOT *PLENTY* OF BRAINS.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO *GO ALONG* WITH OTHER PEOPLE ALL THE TIME.

INCLUDING *HIM.*

YOU'RE HERE, AREN'T YOU? *GOING ALONG* WITH HIM?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU *MEAN.*

I'VE SEEN THE WAY HE *LOOKS* AT YOU. I'VE SEEN HIM... *TOUCH* YOU.

AND I *ALWAYS* SHAKE HIM *OFF.* BECAUSE I DON'T TOLERATE *CREEP BEHAVIOR.*

PAM. Have you-- HAVE YOU BEEN *SLEEPING* WITH HIM?

...Yes.

NO. BABY--

--HAVE YOU-- SINCE *WE* STARTED-- DO YOU *STILL--*

Once or twice.

WHY?

I JUST-- I COULDN'T FIND A WAY *NOT* TO.

IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR *SO LONG* THAT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO *STOP* IT--

WE GOTTA GET *AWAY* FROM ALL THIS-- FROM *HIM*--

--ALEC AND *LINDA* HAVE ALREADY SPLIT. THEY DIDN'T WANT THEIR *RESEARCH* USED FOR THIS *MADNESS*--

ARE YOU *ANGRY* AT ME? I--I THOUGHT YOU *KNEW*--

NO. I'M NOT ANGRY AT *YOU.*

I'M ANGRY AT *THIS.* I'M ANGRY THAT WE HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THIS *TYPE OF GUY* IN ORDER TO DO WHAT WE *LOVE.*

HE'S A *GENIUS* THOUGH. WHATEVER *ELSE* HE MIGHT BE, HE'S AN *ACTUAL GENIUS.*

GENIUSES ARE ALLOWED TO PLAY BY *DIFFERENT RULES,* RIGHT? BECAUSE WHAT THEY DO IS TOO *IMPORTANT* TO WORRY ABOUT SHALLOW *SOCIAL CONVENTIONS*--

AND WHO'S DOING THIS GENIUS'S *HEAVY LIFTING?* *Hmm?*

WHO'S HERE *DAY AND NIGHT* MAKING SURE HIS *GENIUS EXPERIMENTS* DON'T WITHER AND *DIE?*

I GET IT, I *GET* IT.

WHAT I *DON'T* GET IS HOW THAT *CHANGES* ANYTHING. WE'RE STILL *STUCK* HERE IF WE WANT TO BE PART OF THIS *WORK*.

NOT *NECESSARILY*.

I'VE BEEN... I'VE BEEN RUNNING SOME OF MY *OWN* EXPERIMENTS. ON THE *SIDE*. IF I CAN GET MY OWN *FUNDING*, WE COULD *ESCAPE* WOODRUE AND HIS *GOD COMPLEX*.

Seriously? WHAT *KIND* OF EXPERIMENTS?

NOT STUFF THAT WOULD FLY WITH ANY KIND OF *ETHICS COMMITTEE*.

BUT THERE ARE *INDEPENDENT FUNDERS* WHO DON'T *CARE* AS MUCH ABOUT *THAT* KIND OF THING.

BUT WHAT... WHAT KIND OF *BOTANY EXPERIMENTS* WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS WITH AN *ETHICS COMMITTEE?* THOSE ARE JUST FOR... FOR *HUMAN* AND *ANIMAL TRIALS*...

I *THINK* YOU'VE *ALREADY* FIGURED IT *OUT*.

Now, years later, I realize that I never really **knew** Bella.

Never really **understood** her.

I didn't appreciate the **lengths** she was willing to go to in order to **succeed.**

Or the **rules** she was willing to **bend** in order to **push** the **boundaries** of **nature.**

AAUGH! AUGH!

WHAT... what *is* it?

IT'S JUST A *PARTHENOCISSUS QUINQUEFOLIA.*

Spliced with *chimpanzee genes...*

THIS IS *DERANGED!* THAT THING IS *DANGEROUS!* HOW IS A... A *PLANT APE* SUPPOSED TO ADVANCE *MEDICAL SCIENCE?* HOW IS THIS SUPPOSED TO *CURE CANCER* OR *PROLONG LIFE SPANS?*

DON'T BE *NAIVE*, PAM. YOU *REALLY* THINK *WOODRUE* DOES ALL THIS TO *HELP HUMANITY?*

HE'S IN IT FOR *HIMSELF.* FAME, MONEY, POWER-- *THAT'S* WHAT HE WANTS, NOT A CURE FOR FLIPPING *CANCER*--

BUT--

WELL, WELL, *WELL.* YOU CERTAINLY SOUND *CONFIDENT* SPEAKING ON *MY* BEHALF, ABOUT *MY* THOUGHTS AND MOTIVATIONS, BELLA.

BUT IN THE *FUTURE,* I'LL *THANK* YOU TO *STAY OUT* OF THINGS YOU *DON'T UNDERSTAND.*

NEITHER OF YOU GIRLS HAVE THE *SLIGHTEST IDEA* WHAT I *WANT.* WHAT I'M TRYING TO *ACCOMPLISH.*

YOU NEVER *HAVE.* YOU'VE BOTH BEEN SUCH A... *DISAPPOINTMENT.*

BUT WE--

AAHHHH

AAAUGH

AAAA!

AAAUGH

HELP!

GET IT-- OFF ME!

HRK?

SNAP

PATHETIC.

A PARLOR TRICK. IF YOU'RE GOING TO CREATE ABOMINATIONS, BELLA, YOU SHOULD FIRST DECIDE WHAT THEY'RE FOR.

IS IT MEANT TO BE A WEAPON? IF SO, IT'S TOO DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.

IS IT MEANT TO BE SERVICE PERSONNEL? IF SO, IT'S TOO AGGRESSIVE.

YOUR LITTLE EXPERIMENTS ARE NOT SERIOUS.

IF YOU WERE REALLY COMMITTED TO EXPLORING THIS NEW FRONTIER, YOU WOULD VOLUNTEER YOURSELVES. YOUR OWN BODIES.

AS I HAVE MINE.

WE WILL BE ONE WITH THE GREEN. SELF-RENEWING. UNDYING. LIKE THE PRIMORDIAL TREES THAT STOOD GUARD OVER THE DAWN OF LIFE ON EARTH.

ALIEN GODS DESCENDED FROM THE SAME MATTER THAT MADE THE STARS.

*I should have **run away**. I should have **seen** the **madness** in his eyes.*

*Instead, I saw an **opportunity** to **finally** do something **better** than Bella.*

I'LL--

I'LL DO IT.

PAM, NO--

I KNEW YOU WOULD BE THE ONE, PAMELA.

MY BEST GIRL.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. WAITING FOR YOU TO BE READY.

NEXT
ORIGIN OF SPECIES
THE FINAL CHAPTER!

THE DARK KNIGHT AND EUROPE'S ELITE INVESTIGATOR
TEAM UP FOR A MONSTROUS MYSTERY!

BATMAN™ DYLAN DOG

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3 ISSUES | MARCH

DC

SBE

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

DAWN OF DC

SUICIDE SQUAD

DREAM TEAM

Amanda Waller has long employed ruthless methods to exert control over the super-powered population of the DC Universe—but she's shown an all-new intensity as of late in stories like *Titans: Beast World*, as she looks to seize power like never before.

The next step in Waller's quest is *Suicide Squad: Dream Team*, a four-issue series from writer Nicole Maines and artists Eddy Barrows and Eber Ferreira. As Waller gathers a new Task Force X—Harley Quinn, Bizarro, Clock King, Black Alice, and Deadeye—she seeks to exploit Dreamer's precognition skills to eliminate what Waller perceives to be a growing threat posed by metahumans.

"This is a very different space than what [Dreamer is] used to, and where we're used to seeing her," Maines says. "Dealing with Amanda Waller and this new Suicide Squad is going to force her to decide what kind of hero she wants to be, and what she is willing to sacrifice to save the future."

The events of *Suicide Squad: Dream Team* will have ramifications across DC's publishing line in 2024—and with issue #1 on sale in March, here's a look at Barrows's character sketches for the series!

DON'T MISS *SUICIDE SQUAD: DREAM TEAM* #1, ON SALE IN MARCH!

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